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C O N F I D E N T I A L

REPORT [REDACTED]

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COUNTRY Austria

DATE DISTR. 10 Nov. 53

SUBJECT Soviet Aircraft Observer System in Austria

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PLACE
ACQUIRED [REDACTED]NO. OF ENCLS.
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REPORT NO.

DATE OF INFO [REDACTED]

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1.

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[REDACTED] prior to October 1951 there were very few VNOS stations; after that date, however, VNOS stations were allegedly established on a large scale, not only along the Soviet - US demarcation line but also along all other sectors of the Austrian border.

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2. In the vicinity of [REDACTED] the 7th Co., 3rd Bn., 290th Gds. Rifle Regt., there was a VNOS platoon assigned to air observation duties on the border. The platoon was subordinate to a VNOS company stationed at Mauer Oehling /N 48-05, E 14-48 / with the 3rd Bn., 290th Gds. Rifle Regt. Hq. The company was subordinate to a VNOS battalion /designation unknown/ stationed at Baden /N 48-01, E 16-147. Soviet Zone of Austria.

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3. The platoon in the vicinity of the 7th Co., 3rd Bn., 290th Gds. Rifle Regt., was divided into four sections. Each section was responsible for an air observation post manned by five or six men including a sergeant in charge. A radio operator was also present at each post. The posts were numbered, and the four sections of the VNOS platoon with the 7th Co. had post numbers 11 through 14. The platoon leader, a Sr. Lt. ORLOV, lived with the section at post number 12.

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ARMY review completed.

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4. The duties of the sections of the VNOS platoon were to report on all aircraft in sight. Data that was required on each aircraft was description, course, altitude, speed, and number of aircraft in the formation. These reports were to have been made without delay, and for this purpose the VNOS posts had top priority on all telephone lines and their own radio frequency. These messages had top priority over all other communications. [redacted] failure to report aircraft was punishable by a prison term. 25X1
5. The individual duties of the five or six men assigned to a VNOS post were to stand a four-hour shift as observer and then a four-hour shift as telephone operator. The other four men were not permitted to leave the vicinity of the post except to visit the VNOS company at Mauer Oehling N 48-05, E 14-48 with the platoon leader's permission. At fixed intervals, perhaps every four or six hours, the VNOS Company at Mauer Oehling made radio contact with each VNOS post under its jurisdiction on the demarcation line. 25X1
6. [redacted]
the 11th and 12th posts messed with the 7th Co., 3d Bn., 290th Gds. Rifle Regt., due to their close proximity. The 13th post messed by themselves on the post with rations delivered by the VNOS company at Mauer Oehling. The 14th post messed with the 6th Co., 2nd Bn., 290th Gds. Rifle Regt.
7. The VNOS posts had no telephone net of their own and were tied in with the regimental net of the 290th Gds. Rifle Regt. Two of these posts were located at Lindau N 47-53, E 14-41 and Opponitz N 47-52, E 14-49. They were probably posts #11 and #12. [redacted] 25X1
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8. The members of VNOS units were basically signal personnel. As such their uniforms and insignia corresponded to that of other members of the signal service of the Soviet Army. Their shoulderboards had a black center with blue piping and had the standard Soviet Army signal insignia. However, due to errors in supply and a shortage of signal shoulderboards, quite often shoulderboards with black centers and red piping were issued to VNOS personnel in lieu of the regular signal shoulderboards.
9. There were rumors that all VNOS personnel would be transferred to the Air Force, in which case they were supposed to have to serve out the four year Air Force tour instead of the Army's three year one.
10. The equipment on each post consisted of a radio set RBM-1, a telephone (the two posts that messed with the 7th Co, 3rd Bn, 290th Gds. Rifle Regt., had American EE-8's), and [redacted] was a new scope or "range-finder" that could detect aircraft at night or in fog. 25X1
[redacted]
[redacted] the classification number of this new "range-finder" equipment was NKN-24 25X1
[redacted] members of the VNOS platoon speak of the scope as having a battery and two view finders. No further information on this item of equipment.
[redacted]
11. The armament of each post consisted of four carbines with 100 rounds each and two PPSH submachine guns with 300 rounds each.
12. The posts had no vehicles. The 11th and 12th posts each had a bicycle, and the 13th post had a horse which was used for draft work.

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13. In addition to the above-mentioned equipment each post had a German-made radio receiver.

Personnel of the posts did listen to the VOA

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There were no restrictions placed on me as to visiting my friend at his post.

14. The posts were bunkers constructed from logs and dirt and were located at aerial vantage points within several hundred meters of the border. The personnel slept on rude, improvised cots in the bunkers.

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